

## ASHTON-IN-MAKERFIELD URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL.

### Medical Officer of Health's Annual Report (21st).

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have for the twenty-first time to submit to you my Annual Report, appending as customary official tables A and B of the Local Government Board, and also table C of the County Council.

The zymotic diseases most prevalent and notifiable under the Act were 2, Scarlatina and Typhoid—and not notifiable, Measles and Pertussis.

The *General Death rate* as calculated upon a population of 14,461 as estimated to the middle of the year is 17·5 per 1000 against 22·3 for previous year, 20·5 for 1892, and 22·7 for 1891. The mean for the decade (1884—1893) being 21·2. This is on the whole therefore favourable—a decrease of 18 deaths under diseases notified, aided by a decrease of deaths (21) from Diarrhœa, and 1 from Measles—the mortality from Pertussis being same as year before.

The *Zymotic death rate* is therefore less and more favourable, being 2·2 per 1000 against 4·1 in 1893, and 3·7 in 1892. The mean for the decade (1884—1893) being 3·0 per 1000.

The *Births registered* were 575, equal to a rate of 39·7 or 6·1 per 1000 less than previous year. The decade (1884—1893) shewing a mean of 43·1.

Registered Births:—Males, 297	Females, 278	Total, 575
„ Deaths:— „ 135	„ 119	„ 254
<u>162</u>	<u>159</u>	<u>321</u>

two persons dying within but belonging without area, bringing net population as estimated to 1st January, 1895, 14,612.

Mortality at subjoined ages: Deaths under 1 year 93, 1 year and under 5 years 43, total under 5 years 136; 5 years and under 15 years 11; 15 years and under 25 years 15; 25 years and under 60 years 43; 60 years and upwards 49; total over 5 years 118—254.

The Infantile death rate is 162 against 200 in 1893, and against a mean for the decade (1884—1893) of 153. This death rate fluctuates considerably, but always maintains a high standard, and seems to run much on a level with all similar districts throughout Lancashire. The mean for the County Urban Districts during 5 years (1889—1893) being 163, while that for England and Wales was 152. Of the 93 deaths under this age column 39 were in Infants from one month to a few hours, viz., Premature Birth 11, Diarrhœa and diseases of Stomach and Bowels 12, Lung diseases 5, Tubercular and Wasting diseases of Infancy 9, other causes 2. Again, in the remaining 54, I find Diarrhœa and diseases of Stomach and Bowels causing 11, diseases of Lungs 15, Tubercular and Wasting diseases of Infancy 22, Dentition, &c., 6.

*Old Age*:—24 males and 25 females died during the year, the united ages being 3492, or an average of 73, nearly.

*Uncertified* deaths numbered 16—much above the average.

*Inquests*:—11 enquiries were held, and 12 were deaths as follows: in or connecting with coal mines 4, falling down stairs 3, burns 1, run over by trap 1 and on railway 1, drowned 1, fractured limb 1.

*Analysis of Causes of Death*:—Scarlet Fever 3 (1 under 2 over 5); Diphtheria 1 (over 5); Croup 3 (under 5); Typhoid Fever 7 (over 5); Measles 2 (under 5); Pertussis 7 (under 5); Diarrhœa 13 (12 under and 1 over 5); Rheumatic Fever 2 (over 5); Phthisis 21 (9 under and 12 over 5); Bronchitis, Pleurisy, and Pneumonia 50 (30 under 20 over 5); Heart disease 14 (over 5); Injuries 12 (1 under 11 over 5); others not specially classified 119 (71 under and 48 over 5); total, 254.

# NOTIFICATION OF INFECTIOUS DISEASE.

<i>Schedule of Act.</i>							<i>Mortality.</i>				
		1890	1891	1892	1893	1894	1890	1891	1892	1893	1894
Smallpox.....		—	—	—	12	—	—	—	—	1	—
Cholera .....		—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Diphtheria .....		1	1	1	3	3	—	1	—	1	1
Membr. Croup .....		1	1	—	9	3	4	—	—	7	3
Erysipelas .....		10	11	32	36	22	—	—	4	1	—
Scarlet Fever.....		53	79	113	174	41	7	6	8	7	3
Continued Fevers {	Typhus.....	—	—	—	—	1	—	—	—	—	—
	Typhoid ...	15	11	44	29*	25*	6	1	10	5	7
	Relapsing...	—	—	5	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
	Continued...	28	2	13	9	7	4	—	—	—	—
	Puerperal...	—	4	5	16	2	—	—	—	10	—
Totals.....		108	109	213	288	104	21	8	22	32	14
Not in Schedule {		Measles .....					10	7	13	3	2
		Diarrhœa .....					10	6	11	34	13
		Pertussis .....					1	10	10	7	7
							42	31	56	76	36

\* One removed to Hospital, proved not to be so.

*Isolation in Hospital*.—Your Hospital was more or less occupied throughout the whole of the year. Six of the notified cases of Enteric Fever were received—one however proved to be suffering from illness of a non-infectious character and was discharged in due course. Another case proved fatal; a young man—who was very reluctant at first to give any information, but I eventually got to know his parents' address and wired for them. They expressed entire satisfaction with the care and attention bestowed upon him. The remainder did well. A case of Typhus which I found in a miserably poor family, in a dirty filthy house in Long Lane, I had removed at once, and found it absolutely necessary to stamp it out to have the remainder of the family removed also while the premises were attended to. As I pointed out last year I had occasion to adopt a similar course in relation to Smallpox, and this provision of quarantine at the Hospital handicaps me very much. Thirteen cases of Scarlet Fever were also treated—all doing well, and from the evidence before me it would appear that six centres were entirely cleared of infection. Of the total (20) five were cases of other practitioners, and 4 (members of one family) were attended by their own medical man. The average stay per case was close on 30 days.

*Sickness during the year*.—From Smallpox we were absolutely free. *Typhus* (the fever specially associated with poverty, filth, dirt, and overcrowding,) presented itself in one instance only. Luckily the case came under my early notice (month of March) and I found it had been introduced from a neighbouring district from where the family had just recently left to reside here (76, Long Lane) one of the children being then convalescent. The case was typical in its character with the petechial rash on upper portion of trunk and upper extremities, and also in its associations referred to. I immediately had the boy, and the remainder of the family, removed to Hospital out of their miserable condition while the house was attended to. Measures being adopted rapidly and stringently effectually checked its progress, this is the more gratifying because there was suitable soil in the same block to which I shall refer later.

*Typhoid and Continued*.—In all 25 cases of the former and 7 of the latter as you will remember were notified. It is usual to coalesce these two combined fevers since the latter does not define any special symptom, and usually runs concurrent like a mild form of typhoid. It does allow for all that a wide latitude for notification. On analysis one case was proved to be non-infectious, and in another instance the symptoms abated so decisively in a few days after notification that these can be excluded.



The incidence of Fever may be shortly outlined as follows:—*January*.—One case—Sim's Lane Ends—where an open ashpit existed, and within very short range of Eaton Cottages, where too often is observed choked gullies and a filthy dirty condition of the yardage. Heath Road—a case—defective drainage. One at Lilly Lane—in a young man who had been working in the sewer. *February*.—Case in Heath Road, where it had occurred in '93. One, Golborne Road—open ashpit. One, Downall Green Road, Far Cross, not far from where sewage had been lying stagnant in dyke before new sewer was laid. Another in Whithill Street (No. 2) opposite side Far Cross—One at Barracks, Downall Green—insanitary conditions all around. *March*.—Another case—Whithill Street (No. 50). At end of March and early *April*, a multiple case (3) occurred in house at Smithy Brow, due without doubt to entrance of sewer gas. Case in Dawber Street, Stubshaw Cross. Then in *May*—a case at 70, Long Lane, in the same block as Typhus occurred, in a dirty filthy house, enough in itself to generate either Typhus or Typhoid. Three more cases in Heath Road, two houses (one, 2 members of same family ill), and a fourth in Bolton Road. *June*.—Case in Barber's Square, off Heath Road. One in Wigan Road, north side Far Cross, and a third at Barracks, Downall Green; a fourth in Nichol Lane. *July*.—Another, south side Far Cross, in an old ill-arranged cottage, with unclean area around; and a second case in Gerard Street. *August* finds us with another in North Street, with suspicious illness of a second member of the family. One, although in a new clean house, Greenhalgh Brow, in the immediate vicinity of Barracks, Downall Green. *September*.—One at old property at Whitledge Green, and one in Brynn Road, just east of Far Cross. *November*.—One at Pewfall Lower Lane. *December*.—One behind Rose Cottage, Wigan Road—the case which proved fatal in Hospital. So that we have three places, as in 1892 and 1893, where a large percentage of the cases occurred—*Bolton Road, Heath Road, and Far Cross*. In 1892, 84 per cent. of the cases occurred at those places, of which 59 per cent. were at *first*, 6 per cent. *second*, 19 per cent. *third*: in 1893, 82 per cent. at the three, of which 54 per cent. were to *first*, 6 per cent. *second*, 22 per cent. *third*: while in 1894 we find 63 per cent. to the *three*, 16·6 to *first*, 20 per cent. *second*, and 26·6 to *third*. In addition we have 10 per cent. at Downall Green—10 per cent. represented by the multiple cases at Smithy Brow, and 16·6 per cent. made up by the odd cases.

	1 to 5.	5 to 15.	15 to 25.	25 to 60.	60 upwards.	Total.
1892	... 3	... 15	... 12	... 13	—	... 43
1893	... 1	... 5	... 10	... 11	—	... 27
1894	... 1	.. 11	... 11	... 7	—	... 30

Continued Fever—all young.

Milk supply or water did not display any part, and there can be no doubt that similar causes as mentioned last year have continued to exert their influence upon the people. I have carefully gone through the Nuisance Inspector's work—a summary of his report being appended—and find that the very large bulk of the nuisances, consisting of defective drainage, stopped drains, choked gullies, foul ashpits, foul privies, overcrowding and the like—all nuisances associated with cause of disease to the tune of something like 160—and, on further examination, month by month, find that the localities bear a striking connection with the notification of infectious sickness.

*Scarlet Fever* of a comparatively very mild form caused 3 deaths, or equal to 7·3 per cent. of those attacked—one of which was in a child, for some time invalided with valvular disease of the heart. In *January* a case was noted at Fish Row, opposite Rosehill; simultaneously 2 cases (multiple) in Long Lane through visiting an infected house—followed by another in Nichol Lane—while later, a third in this neighbourhood, Toothill Street, in September. In February we found it also at Far Cross (2 cases) and also at Heath Lane (removed to Hospital). In March, at Garswood Station Road, a case (removed to Hospital), and in which lane another occurred in June—a third at Sim's Lane Ends in October. In March, May and June, four cases, all near Far Cross, of which 3 were removed. During the months of July, August, September, and October, six cases occurred on Rosehill (one removed). Three cases in Stubshaw Cross district in June, July and August, and two cases, multiple, (removed to Hospital) imported from Earlestown into this area in November. A group of 4 cases, multiple, at Pewfall in October, and said to have been caught at School in Haydock. December saw a group of 4 cases, multiple, removed out of the Town into Hospital, and another group of 3 multiple of cases occurring at Skitter's Grove, the year closing with an isolated case at Brynn Gate, removed to Hospital. Milk supply as to spread was negatived, and although on enquiry as to causes parents seemed to think it had been caught at school, one is inclined very much to accept this with great caution, since if it were so, we should have had a much larger distribution. Indiscriminate and unthoughtful visiting would seem to play a more important part in its dissemination.

*Erysipelas*.—Twenty-two instances—of which about 25 per cent. were traumatic, or connected with injury, occurred—of which gross total four were referred to Heath Road, and 5 to Bolton Road. I have pointed out how insanitary conditions play a part in the causation of Erysipelas.

*Diphtheria*.—One each in the months of April, September and October, all at widely different parts of the township—and Membranous Croup affecting young children from cold and damp—also noted thrice—twice in October and once in November, as is usual in cold damp months of the year.

*Puerperal* cases do not this year call for comment.

*Measles and Whooping Cough* were prevalent during back end of year—former running short sharp course chiefly around Far Cross in the month of October, and I drew attention of Schoolmasters to the fact; while the latter lasted from October to December, when it declined—the mortality was respectively 2 and 7.

The most important matters which I have had to bring before your notice during the course of the year may be briefly summarised as follows; January—to the general insanitary (and some untenable) condition of several properties at Stanley Mill, a block which has called for much comment on previous occasions—to structural defects at Stanley House and Stanley Bank Farm, rendering them prejudicial to the health of the occupiers—also to insanitary or rather I ought to say houses unfit for habitation at (a) Greenhalgh Brow, (b) Rectory Road, and (c) Mill House, Downall Green—advising further that a cottage very undesirable for a dwelling in A court, Liverpool Road might be advantageously dealt with under the Housing of the Working Classes Act—as its removal would vastly improve four cottages immediately in front. March—with N. Inspector met owners of property condemned in Rectory Road, and pointed out the insanitary conditions which could not be remedied by alteration—and the necessity for abolishment. April—house unfit for habitation, and really dangerous, at Edge Green. June—blocking of sewer at Wigan Road and its effects. July—insanitary condition of property known as the Old Smithies, Old Florida. August—filthy houses in Sumner's Yard and Gas Street and courts off it; also to dilapidations and structural defects of many cottages in Lilly Lane, rendering them very injurious to health of occupiers. Circular letter from Local Government Board *re* desirability of notifying Diarrhœa having regard to its possible connection with Cholera—discussed but not adopted. September—to insanitary condition of and sickness in North Street—density and insufficient air space in and about courts off Gas Street, with a view of dealing with them under Housing of Working Classes Act—inviting your Sanitary Committee to inspect same along with me, which was done on the following Monday. November—house insanitary and defective at corner of Souther's Lane, rendering it unfit for habitation; and to the bad condition of footpaths at Park Lane.

With regard to property unfit for tenancy that at Greenhalgh's has been pulled down, and a new block erected near old site on main road, and I believe 4 of those at Rectory Road have also been demolished, and natural decay levelled that at Edge Green. In addition, several odd old thatched cottages have given place to entirely new property, building having been remarkably brisk as one may say "up to date." *Re* Gas Street and the courts leading out of it; several members met me on September 10th, and were evidently satisfied that a lung or breathing space should be opened out, reporting that they were of opinion my recommendation should be carried out, the clerk being instructed to see the owners and ascertain their views on the matter. Some very important work has been carried out during the year, to wit, the completion in March of the new Sewage works for treating Brynn Gate area before the effluent is discharged into the brook, and which so far is giving satisfaction. It is sincerely to be hoped with this great acquisition, considering the perpetual trouble we have had in years past in connection with the drainage of that neighbourhood, we shall have marked beneficial results. Flushing arrangements have been made whereby at the inlet of main sewer near R. C. Infant School in Liverpool Road flood-water during storms can be run through the sewer and discharged at the outlets at the footbridge in the croft, Jack Bridge and Town Bridge—detritus and sediment can be washed through straight away. A very considerable length of new line of main sewer has been laid along Downall Green Road receiving the drainage of the several new blocks of property along the roadside—further we are almost at the completion of an intercepting sewer from Rose Hill to Wigan Road—whereby the sewage from 86 houses which hitherto ran into Perry Brook now joins the main pipe in Wigan Road. Near St. Luke's School in Lilly Lane some 110 yards of sewer has been opened and cleansed and another 50 yards of the "low level sewer" beyond the Gas Works has been so opened and cleansed. The Sewage settling tanks on the farm have been cleansed fortnightly



and an extra man engaged in regulating sewage flow on the farm and the plots. The reservoir at Ashton Mill has been cleansed of its debris. I have from time to time pointed out the essentials of sanitation, which resolve themselves into (a) the improvement of conditions under which the people live, (b) the adoption of measures for securing best maximum of those conditions, and (c) the attainment of a minimum death rate, at all events from so called preventible disease. It will be obvious that to the dwellings of the poor every authority must give careful attention, since the weakest and poorest, although not in every instance from individual apathy as to personal cleanliness and household comfort, are driven to live in the very oldest, and consequently ill arranged unhealthy areas, both in towns and country districts. It is from such areas that disease once introduced, or originating *de novo*, rapidly spreads. We must look to those least able to help themselves, and where we find people living under adverse conditions we must apply remedies. Some may become inured it is true, but must give way to protection of the young—and powers are now provided for taking such steps as may be necessary, without having to prove the past occurrence of disease in connection with unhealthy dwellings or crowded spaces before proceedings are taken. I have frequently emphasized the necessity for having all yards and open spaces properly levelled and paved, or laid with suitable impervious material to ensure efficient drainage and cleanliness—and in this connection also we frequently see dilapidated spouting, sometimes altogether wanting, which leads to dampness of walls and foundations, increasing the dangers to health arising from the before-mentioned. Improvements therefore in these details would, as I say, conduce to greater cleanliness and comfort, lessen sickness in the way of cold, croup, rheumatism, respiratory diseases and the like. It has been said “The best chest protector is worn on the sole of the foot,” but I prefer dispensing with chest protectors. Then we must endeavour to dispense with the 200 or more old privy middens which have been so frequently animadverted upon as a great source of danger, both by myself and Local Government Board Inspectors. With a conversion of these into pails, dry ash-pits or W.Cs., and an extension of arrangements for flushing sluggish sewers, with systematic inspection of the sewers and drains, and their ventilation, especially at the upper or dead ends, I should anticipate a rapid decline in fever and diarrhoea. In excrement removal I think we might make some marked improvement. I should never approve of the Cart system and its attendant disagreeable evils. I consider it a disgrace to us, both as regards sight and smell. The laying out of side and back streets, will to my mind, be a question soon forced upon you for consideration, to facilitate scavenging. As an appendix to the return from Mr. Gamble, I have tabulated the returns for three or four years from which you will see there is a considerable amount of work requiring attention—at all events nuisances do not seem to diminish. I see many come under primary observation through enquiries after notification—and we must try and keep nuisances down as early as possible. There has been no occasion to take any steps in regard to offensive processes of trade, bake houses or workshops, or the Food and Drugs Act, although I have had two or three occasions to look in at the Market as to meat exposed for sale.

#### NUISANCES, &c.

NATURE.	1890.	1891.	1892.	1893.	1894.
Insanitary, Defective, Stopped Drains, Stopped Gullies, Defective Disting, &c. ....	40	61	112	104	101
Dilapidated Closets and Ashpits . . . . .	11	23	38	84	35
Keeping Poultry, Animals, &c. ....	51	—	92	1	2
Insufficient Closet Accommodation . . . . .	—	4	53	12	—
Overcrowding. ....	—	6	7	11	7
Offensive Accumulations (Erections), &c. ....	8	—	8	7	4
Filthy Houses . . . . .	—	2	3	—	13
Dilapidated Houses . . . . .	—	1	—	37	3
Defective Roofage, Spouting, Eaves, &c. ....	—	—	—	28	74
Miscellaneous . . . . .	2	16	10	3	5
Cowsheds, Dirty. ....	—	15	—	22	25
	112	128	323	309	269
Converted Closets, &c. ....	12	26	54	32	28
Houses Fumigated. ....	—	45	147	123	—
			rooms		

## SUMMARY OF NUISANCES DEALT WITH DURING THE YEAR.

Stopped Drains ... ..	70
Defective Drains ... ..	22
Stopped Gullies... ..	6
Dilapidated Roofage, Spouting, &c. ... ..	74
Defective Paving around Yard Gullies ... ..	3
Dilapidated and Foul Ashpits... ..	12
Dilapidated and Foul Privies ... ..	23
Dilapidated and Insanitary Houses ... ..	3
Cowsheds Insufficiently Lighted, Ventilated and Drained ...	15
Cowsheds in a Dirty Condition ... ..	10
Filthy Houses ... ..	13
Filthy Yards ... ..	3
Overcrowding ... ..	7
Accumulation of Offensive Matters ... ..	4
Nuisances from Keeping Pigeons and Poultry ... ..	2
Depositing Fish Refuse in Streets ... ..	2
	<u>269</u>

## Number of Rooms Disinfected and Limewashed where Infectious Diseases have appeared—

Disinfected ... ..	86
Limewashed ... ..	18
	<u>104</u>

Number of Privies converted to the Pail System ... ..	28
Number of Ashpits covered ... ..	9

One hawker has been prosecuted for depositing fish refuse in the street, and fined 2/6 and costs.

In conclusion, I am glad that in this my first report to your new Council, the death rate has declined to a fairly satisfactory one, and trust your deliberations will lead to such improvements in the township, year by year, as will tend to keep up a clean bill of health.

I remain, Sir and Gentlemen,

Your obedient servant,

NATHAN HANNAH,

Fell. of Inc. Soc. of M.O.H's.